

Misunderstood.



An owl into a garden flew,
And perched high over the gate;
A maiden roamed 'mid the flowers and dew,
Although it was late and lonely, too.
Alas, she knew!

She warbled a ditty so sweet and clear,
She sang, "To thee my heart is true;
And the owl leaned over, the better to hear,
And murmured discreetly, "To whom, my dear?"
To whom—to whom?"

The maiden shrieked, as maidens will,
And in trembling haste withdrew;
But the owl stared and smiled in his bill,
And said very blandly—he's saying it still—
"To whom—to whom!"

THE ANNUAL FAIR.

HARVEST TIME FOR THE UBIQUITOUS FAKIRS.

Celebrities of the County and Plains Folk
From the Farm Meet Once a Year for
a Good Time.

The annual county fair, is one of the institutions of this country. The N. Y. Sun recently described the sidelights of these gatherings as follows:

In the meantime the numerous fakirs had set up their stands, thawed out their throats, and begun shouting for business. A fair without fakirs would be like a circus without clowns. They entertain



THE CANE FAKIR.

and instruct simultaneously. The shoe-blackening man was the first heard. He made one or two desultory remarks which caused a crowd to collect, when he began to exhort them on the quality of his ware, and to prove his statements by putting a dizzy polish on an old legless boot. He was a red-faced man, whose efforts affected his complexion immensely.

"Gentlemen, why profane this hallowed ground with those unsightly boots you wear, when for five cents you could have a shine that would dazzle the eyes, and make the green-eyed demon of jealousy gnaw at the heart of an aristocrat?" he began. "Any boot, no matter how coarse the leather (or the wearer) will take a brilliant polish. And the blacking is only five cents a box.



THE OLD FARMER TRIES THE GAME.
Have some respect for yourselves, gentlemen, buy a box and shine those rusty shoes of yours."

The burning desire to make money in games of chance, for which the farmers have long been famous, was thoroughly demonstrated by the way they surrounded the swinging ball machine. The women folks gathered, too, and often urged the men to play, assuring them that they could win if they kept cool.

"If you knock the pin down on the rebound of the ball you get a dollar, and it only costs you ten cents to play," the backer shouted.

"Be gosh I kin do it," muttered an old farmer. "Tain't hard, and I don't know an easier way to make a dollar."

The old man laid down his ten cents, took the ball in both hands, and, after great deliberation, let it swing. The ball cut the air on one side of the pin, returned and cut it on the other. The old man looked rather surprised.

"Try it again. You may get it this time."

"Durned if I don't. Tain't no use a-givin' up the first time. It only costs 10

Cents, and if I kin only hit that wooden peg I'll get a dollar."

Again the old farmer swung the ball, and again it passed by the pin. He was undecided what to do next. He was more than half inclined to drop out. But the fakir read his mind, and soothed him by saying: "I'll show you how to do it." Taking the ball he let it swing. It just cleared the pin going by, and knocked it down on the rebound, of course. "The secret of success in this game," the fakir explained, "is to aim close to the pin when you swing. If you do that you can't help but knock it down. I tell you this because I want you all to make a dollar with 10 cents. I get your 10 cents and you get my dollar. That's fair, ain't it?"

The old man thought it was, and guessed he would try just once more. He laid down his dime, took the ball, aimed long and deliberately, and then let it swing. The crowd pressed close to see. The ball cleared the pin and returned as if it would clear the pin again,



THE FAKIR LOSES.

but it didn't. The fakir realized that this play was the turning point in the tide of the old man's mind, and he bent the frame so that the ball would knock down the pin, and the old farmer was charmed. He had played three times and won a dollar; consequently, he was seventy cents ahead of the game. But he must have more. He swore he wouldn't stop until he had every dollar that the fakir had to spare. The fakir told him not to, and whispered the information that he had more than he knew what to do with. The old farmer then began his reckless play. He stuck to the fakir with the tenacity of a leech; but instead of bleeding the fakir, the fakir bled him. At odd intervals he was allowed to make a dollar, but for every dollar he won he lost three. When he had lost all the handy money that he had he quit and ambled off to see how his fat hogs looked beside those of a competitor.

His place at the ball was taken by a smooth-faced young farmer, who knocked the pin down the first time and shipped with the dollar and a smile of satisfaction on his face. He made the rounds of the other similar machines, and the last time the reporter saw him he had bought a bundle of children's toy whips and had turned fakir himself. "Pop brought me to the fair to-day," he said to the reporter. "He gave me a dollar for peanuts, pop corn, and sarsaparilla. He will be bitchin' up the old mare as soon as the balloon goes up and a-lookin' for me to go home with him; but he won't find me. I'm a sport. This is a durned sight more fun than a-ploughin' a field where the earth is all stone or a-buskin' corn. I'm going ter follow fairs for a livin' now. I'm jist gittin' my hand in now. Oh, Lordy, there comes the old man," and the bucolic youth buried himself in the crowd.



THE WHIP SELLER.

The cane man did a rushing business with the young people. He had an exhibition of giddy canes and a volée of great penetration and power. "Any cane you ring is yours," he shouted; "and if you put a ring over the middle one I'll give you a dollar besides. Try your luck, young men. Remember that you ain't in fashion unless you carry a cane. All young men in the cities carry canes when they are out with their sweethearts." There was usually a consultation between the young man and his girl, after which he would pay five cents and throw three rings, his sweetheart directing him.

The cheap jewelry fakir, however, did the greatest business. His fine line of brass dazzled the eye of the country beauties and caused the young men to spend their money lavishly to make a lasting impression on their sweethearts. They bought the stuff in sober earnest



THE BLIND SAILOR AND HIS PARTNER.

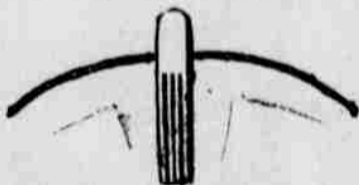
and were delighted with their bargains. All the girls carried their cotton gloves in their hands so that they might show the conquest of hearts bound to them by little hoops of brazen brass. From their breasts, too, flashed gaudy pins, while dangling from the vests of the young men were heavy chains.

The whip man catered to an older throng. He was on his wagon and surrounded by whips that he made himself in Westerly, R. I. He said: "I've sold you whips these many years, and every year I sell a better class of whips. And then he would lash a wooden rail until the splinters flew in all directions. The whips stood the severe test and the farmers bought them as fast as the whip man could deal them out without interfering with his talk. But the institution that furnished the young farmers endowed with lots of glower the greatest satisfaction for the money was the "Great African Dodger," who stuck his woolly head through a rent in a sheet and let any one throw base balls at him at the rate of "three balls for a nickel." All day long a crowd jostled against the ropes endeavoring to get a show. Balls went whizzing through the brief intervening space at a terrific rate of speed and hit the belying sheet, but none of them hit the dodger's head. A few came dangerously near, but were prevented from hitting the mark for which they were aimed by a quick duck of the head. The dodger drove his customers almost wild with his taunts and his faces, and every one tried to take the energy out of him by disfiguring his face. But it availed them naught.

A NEW HAT-FASTENER.

It Will Keep Head-Gear in Place Without Perforating the Brains.

A Philadelphia manufacturer appears to have solved the difficulty of keeping ladies' hats upon their lovely heads without the use of hat-pins. A hat-fastener (like the following illustration) is fastened by elastic cord inside the hat.



When the hat or bonnet is put on the fastener is adjusted by gently pulling it down and then pulling it up under the hair until hidden by the hat, after the manner of a side-comb. The method of adjustment is shown as follows:



—Philadelphia Times.

Trading Receipts.

In the olden days, when railroad companies used to believe their conductors honest, an official, whose run was from Buffalo east, was called into the President's room at the end of one of his trips, and the big man kindly said to him:

"John, the receipts on your runs have been growing beautifully less for some time past."

"Yes, sir, but travel is very light, you know."

"Is it? I hadn't heard of that. John, you have lately built a nice house?"

"Yes."

"You have a diamond pin?"

"Yes."

"Keep a horse and buggy?"

"Yes."

"And your salary is only \$40 per month, John?"

"Yes, sir."

"I don't think you would steal from the company."

"Oh, no! not not sir!"

"But I've a proposition to make. Suppose you give the road your receipts, and you take every thing else coming in! If you don't, I don't see how we are going to pay running expenses over a month longer!"—N. Y. Sun.

The Lovely Pests.

Angry Farmer—"See here! don't you know I can't afford to have my grass trampled down for the sake of a few berries? You'll have to move out of here."

Lady from the City—"We are not picking berries; we are gathering a handful of those lovely, charming, golden-hearted, snow-tipped, ox-eyed daisies."

Farmer—"O, I beg your pardon. Go right ahead, and come again tomorrow and bring your relatives."—Judge.

Circumstances Alter Cases.

"Mr. Boardheavy," said the young man, with much assurance, "I have come again to ask you for the hand of your daughter." "Didn't I tell you only last night that my daughter should never marry the son of a poor peach-grower?" "Yes, said the lover, "but my father is no longer poor. He found two baskets of peaches in his orchard this morning, and—" "Take her, my boy, and may you be happy."—Norrington Herald.

Correcting an Exaggeration.

The knack of looking at the bright side of things was never developed to such perfection as in the case of a southerner, who, after a railroad accident, telegraphed to his friend's wife: "Your husband killed in railroad accident; head, both arms, and both legs cut off." But later this correction was received: "First report exaggerated; your husband killed; head and legs cut off, but only one arm."

Sixty thousand blue gum trees have been planted this year on the Lankershim ranch in Los Angeles county, California.

IT IS EASY TO CARVE.

THAT IS, IF YOU THOROUGHLY UNDERSTAND HOW TO DO IT.

The Trials and Tribulations of a Young Man at a Dinner Party When Suddenly Called Upon.

A turkey is not hard to carve—that is, if you know how, says Eugene J. Cantin in the Oakland (Cal.) Tribune. He continues:

"How easy it is to go through life thinking that you know how when really you do not. Theoretically, what I didn't know about carving was—well, was hardly worth knowing. Practically, this knowledge extended no further than a rare tenderloin steak or a well done cold tongue—that is, until a few evenings ago, at which time the wide difference between practice and theory was demonstrated in a very thorough manner. It was in Chicago, and I had been invited to an informal dinner at the residence of a friend. On the day in question the host, that was to be, in some manner severely cut one of his fingers, and thereby hangs a tale—a bloodless one, however.



"At 8 o'clock the party of twelve, half of whom were ladies, assembled at the table. The accident to the host necessitated the appointment of a substitute to do the carving, and, as fate decreed, the honor came to me—a case of having greatness thrust upon one with a vengeance. Ere I had been seated at the head of the table a minute I began to realize the discomforts and the possibilities of the situation, and the practice-theory ideas came forcibly to mind. It was necessary to keep cool, however, and, as the first course required only some slight dexterity with soup-ladle and fish-spoon, I began to gain confidence and join in the conversation freely. Never while until you are out of the woods—I never will again. A great big Thanksgiving and Christmas combined turkey came to view, and was placed before me. Undoubtedly it was the largest and most intricate turkey I ever saw, and my temperature went up at once to 150 degrees in the shade.

"I was determined to keep cool. The conversation was general by this time, and I saw my chance to dissect that bird without attracting attention. I began whacking away at the turkey in a calm, know-it-all way. It wasn't on skates, but pretty soon it commenced to skate around on the platter at a lively rate, and my outward serenity began to vanish and perspiration appear at every pore. It now seemed necessary to stand up to it, and I pushed back my chair. Of course the very thing I feared commenced to happen. Interest began to center upon me at the head of the table, and not on the conversation, which



gradually calmed down and then flickered out into cold, sickening silence. To make matters worse there was a well, adjectives fall me here—but there was a little pet terrier in the room, and soon after I had commenced giving an imitation of a man who knows how to carve a turkey, he started to frisk about my feet and to tug at my trousers; something he kept up throughout the performance, to my discomfort.

"After ages of silence, broken only by the clash of carvers and the dull swish of the turkey as it skated up and down and around to elude me, I got off enough meat to go around, and resumed my seat with an inaudible sigh of relief. But it was only for a moment, for one lady—out of pure cussedness, I suppose; it could be nothing else—called attention to the scarcity, in fact, the total absence, of dark meat, and then, of course, every one wanted 'some of the dark.' I got up again. I cut this way, and then the other way, turned the bird over half a dozen times, and once on the table. With a knowledge acquired of numerous experiences with roast turkey—when some other fellow did the carving—I was certain there should be dark meat somewhere, but in spite of all my efforts and searching no dark meat came to light. There was no restraint to mirth now, and the room fairly rang with laughter as I snuk back crushed, limp, and defeated into my chair after announcing firmly that there happened to be no dark meat on this particular turkey—an extraordinary fact, but to

the truth of which I could vouch. I registered a resolve, however, as I sat down, that the intricacies of a roast turkey would be more familiar to me in twenty-four hours, and that I would never rest until I could turn off anything from a wing up. Until black coffee came I was the object of remarks which seemed to strike the others as being funny.

"My trials were not over. We had been in the drawing-room but a moment when the only Englishman present added the last straw: "Ab, dear fellow, aw, goodness gracious, what ever can be the matter with your trousers?" There was something the matter with my 'trousers.' I looked down and discovered to my horror that while I was making broads into that turkey the pet terrier had not been idle. He had made a fringe around the bottom of one leg and the other had a hole as high as my shoe tops. This was awful. The yell that went up when this mishap was discovered could be heard a mile. I hastened back to the hotel. It had cost a \$15 pair of trousers so far, but my mind was made up that it could cost \$100 before I would cease looking for some one to post me in carving. It was at great personal expense, but the chef at the hotel told me all about it. Now I can carve, but I am loaded to the muzzle for the man who asks me to again."

THE LAST STRAW.

Much Was Overlooked by the Proud Boston Girl, but She Drew the Line.

They were standing by the window looking out at the golden sunset. His arm was around her slender waist and her head rested confidently on his manly shoulder. Life looked easy to the youthful pair, and not a visible cloud obscured the firmament of their hopes.

"Perseus," she murmured, "it seems incredible that we never met until three weeks ago."

"It does, indeed, Andromeda," replied the youth. "We have had hardly time to become acquainted with each other's peculiarities and prejudices. Yet it seems as if we must have known one another always."

"And that reminds me, Perseus," rejoined the lovely New England girl, thoughtfully adjusting her spectacles, "that I have never heard you express your opinion of theosophy."

"My opinion of theosophy, love," the young man said, breaking it to her as gently as he could, "is that the system as thus far developed hardly meets the requirements of an exact science."

It was a severe shock, but the maiden did not flinch. She only leaned a little harder on the young man's shoulder.

"You find much to admire in Emerson and Thoreau, do you not?" she asked hopefully.

"I cannot say I do. The one seems too transcendental, the other almost atheistic."

"Surely, Perseus, you like Ibsen?"

"Ibsen, my dear, makes me ti—he wears me."

"Does not the Delsartean idea appeal to you favorably?"

"H'm! This Delsartean business, dearest, I regard as a harmless kind of thing, suitable for 12-year-old school girls who have no roller-skating facilities."

"Well, Perseus," she said, with a happy sigh, "what difference does it make after all, if we love each other? These little differences of opinion shall not separate us."

"No, Andromeda, they shall not. We will not speak of them. They are trifles. Look at the roses in this beautiful vase."

A cry of horror broke from the lips of Andromeda. She sprang from his embrace.

"What is the matter, dearest?" exclaimed the young man in the utmost concern.

"Don't touch me!" she panted, sinking on a sofa. "Don't come near me!"

"What have I—"

"Mr. Grigson," she said, recovering herself by a powerful effort and standing erect. "I can overlook your lack of appreciation of the great names of our literature. I can forgive your want of sympathy with the great movements in the world of thought that possess my soul and move all my powers to action. But"—and the proud Boston girl pointed sternly to the door—"I can never look with anything but utter abhorrence on a man who does not know how to pronounce the word vahzi! Go!"—Chicago Tribune.

One Way to Tell a Happy Pair.

There is nothing that the average bridegroom so much desires to avoid as a disclosure of the fact of his recent marriage. Not that he is at all ashamed of it. Oh, no! But there is a shyness about him which induces him to conceal the fact. This is shown especially at the bridegroom's first visit to the hotel on his bridal tour.

The other evening a young man walked briskly up to the desk in one of the hotels in this city, and, with a very badly assumed air of nonchalance, registered "Mr. and Mrs. —." A room was assigned him, and when he was out of hearing the clerk leaned over the desk, and, confidentially speaking to several acquaintances standing there, said:

"Just married."

"How do you know?" was asked.

"Oh, you never see an old married man register 'Mr. and Mrs.' It's always so-and-so and wife. You just notice now if it isn't so."—Washington Post.

The Blissfield, Mich., postmaster has issued a formal notice that he won't lick stamps for anybody, and that hereafter letters dropped in the mail box with 2 cents don't go. He says the letters will be held for postage even if a \$5 bill is pinned to every one.